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Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 05491 311717Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00
XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02 LAB-04 EPG-02 SIL-01 OMB-01
NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04 CEA-01 AGRE-00 L-03 /104 W
----------010033Z 007835 /64
R 311527Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9988
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
ALL EC CAPITALS
USMISSION OECD PARIS
USMISSION GENEVA

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ASEAN, EEC
SUBJECT: EC/ASEAN PLANS TO STRENGTHEN TIES

REF: (A) EC BRUSSELS 4346, (B) EC BRUSSELS 1240
(C) 76 EC BRUSSELS A-456, (D) EC BRUSSELS A-022 (NOTAL)

1. EC PERMDEL, EC COUNCIL SECRETARIAT, AND ASEAN EMBASSY OFFICIALS IN BRUSSELS INFORM US THAT THEY ARE DISCUSSING WAYS TO STRENGTHEN EC/ASEAN TIES. AS INDICATED IN REFS. B AND C, ASEAN WOULD LIKE TO BROADEN ITS CONTACTS WITH THE EC TO INCLUDE THE MEMBER STATES. CURRENTLY ASEAN MEETS ONLY WITH THE COMMISSION WITHIN THE FRAMWORK OF A JOINT
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STUDY GROUP.

2. AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE EC COUNCIL, THE UK HAS PROPOSED ESTABLISHING AN AEAAN/EC DIALOGUE IN WHICH THE NINE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES AND ASEAN AMBASSADORS WOULD MEET SEMI-ANNUALLY TO DISCUSS MUTUAL PROBLEMS. THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES, WE ARE TOLD,

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HAS GENERALLY AGREED TO THIS PROPOSAL, AND THE JUNE 21
FOREIGN MINISTERS COUNCIL IS EXPECTED TO AGREE TO
SUGGESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUCH A DIALOGUE TO
AEAN. EC OFFICIALS BELIEVE THIS GESTURE WOULD DEMON-
STRATE GROWING EC INTEREST IN ASEAN.

3. AT THE SAME COUNCIL, FRG PERMDEL OFFICIALS SAY
THAT FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER PLANS TO CALL FOR A
NEW EC IMPETUS TOWARD ASEAN. GENSCHER REPORTEDLY WANTS
TO FOLLOW UP HIS RECENT TRIP TO THE ASEAN REGION WITH
A POLITICAL STATEMENT UNDERLYING THE IMPORTANCE THE
COMMUNITY ASSIGNS TO ASEAN.

4. ASEAN OFFICIAL HERE ARE NON-COMMITTAL REGARDING A
POSSIBLE EC/ASEAN DIALOGUE. THEY WANT TO STRENGTHEN
THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE EC, BUT AS A GROUP, THEY HAVE
NOT YET AGREED ON HOW TO DO THIS. THEY ARE PREPARED,
HOWEVER, TO RESPOND TO AN EC PROPOSAL.

5. UK PERMDEL OFFICIALS ARE PLEASED THAT COREPER HAS
GENERALLY AGREED TO STRENGTHEN TIES WITH ASEAN. THEY
WERE CONCERNED THAT FRANCE MIGHT BLOCK SUCH A PROPOSAL
OUT OF FEAR THAT THIS WOULD DETRACT FROM EC EFFORTS IN
AFRICA. BRITISH OFFICIALS HOPE THAT EVENTUALLY EC AND
ASEAN CAN DRAW UP A COOPERATION AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD
FORMALIZE REGULAR CONTACTS ON A RANGE OF ISSUES, SUCH
AS TRADE, ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION, DEVELOP-
MENT AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS. THESE OFFICIALS ADD, HOWEVER,
THAT ASEAN AS AN ORGANIZATION WILL HAVE TO BECOME MORE
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EFFECTIVE AND COHESIVE BEFORE SUCH AN AGREEMENT WOULD BE
FEASIBLE.

6. COMMENT: THE POSSIBLE EC PROPOSAL TO SET UP A
DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE NINE AND ASEAN WOULD BE SIMILAR IN
FORMAT TO THE ONGOING EC/LATIN AMERICAN DIALOGUE. AS
INDICATED IN REF. D, THIS DIALOGUE HAS SPUTTERED ALONG
AND ACCOMPLISHED LITTLE. LATIN MAERICAN OFFICIALS ARE
FRUSTRATED OVER THE DIALOGUE'S STRUCTURE AND HAVE PROPOSED CHANGING
IT. IN VIEW OF THIS EXPERIENCE, IT IS SURPRISING THAT
THE EC WOULD CONSIDER ESTABLISHING THE SAME TYPE OF
DIALOGUE WITH ASEAN. EC OFFICIALS EXPLAIN, HOWEVER, THAT
ASEAN WOULD BE A SMALLER GROUPING OF COUNTRIES WITH THE
POTENTIAL FOR GREATER COHESION THAN THE LATIN AMERICANS
IN ADDITION, A DIALOGUE OFFERS THE FLEXIBILITY OF
ADAPTING EC RELATIONS TO ASEAN CHANGING CONDITIONS AND
ENABLES THE EC GO GIVE VISIBLE POLITICAL SUPPORT TO
ASEAN.HINTON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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